

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: Madera County Department of Social Services

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This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

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<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:</b>	<b>Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced
Process Description:	<b>The Child Welfare Administrative Analyst shall maintain a comprehensive list of all children under the care, custody, and control of the Agency on a weekly basis utilizing a computer-generated report from Business Objects. This report clearly indicates the identified category, the Placement Home name, address, and phone number so that, in the event of a disaster, calls or visits can be made to ensure the safety of our children as well as determine if relocation has been or may be necessary. A hard copy of the list shall be kept in two separate offices, the child welfare Administrative Analyst's office and the child welfare Program Manager's office, labeled, "ER Disaster Child Contact Roster." This list can be</b>

	<p><b>accessed in the event of an emergency wherein CWS personnel are required to contact each foster child to ensure their safety.</b></p> <p><b>All CWS personnel with an assigned caseload will contact the children and/or their care provider on their assigned caseloads via telephone and/or personal home visits utilizing CMS/CWS or the physical case file. If the assigned CWS staff person is not available, the Officer of the Day or another assigned CWS staff person shall make the contacts. Caseload coverage shall be ensured by each CWS Supervisor, Program Manager or Deputy Director, in said order. Vocational Assistants may be assigned to help contact all of the children.</b></p> <p><b>Probation:</b>  <b>The probation department will routinely prepare a list all of children in group homes and foster care with names of group homes, addresses, phone numbers and two or more contact personnel. The list will also contain information about special medical or mental health needs of the children in placement and the names, addresses and phone numbers of parents and or guardians. The lists will be e-mailed and printed out by all facility and probation managers and the information will be kept at the five offices. The five offices include the Juvenile Services Division, Boot Camp, Juvenile Detention Facility, Adult Services Division and the Administration Offices. In addition, the placement officer, the division supervisor and back up placement officer will retain a copy of the information with them at all times. The officers are responsible for keeping the information in a secure location for confidentiality purposes. Obsolete copies will be periodically mechanically shredded.</b></p> <p><b>The placement officer or other designated staff will contact each group/foster home provider by telephone to determine the safety and security status of each child or children in their care.</b></p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	<p><b>All CWS personnel with an assigned caseload will contact the children and/or their care provider on their assigned caseloads via telephone and/or personal home visits utilizing CMS/CWS or the physical case file. If the assigned CWS staff person is not available, the Officer of the Day or another assigned CWS staff person shall make the contacts. Caseload coverage shall be ensured by each CWS Supervisor, Program Manager or Deputy Director, in said order. Other DSS staff may be assigned to help contact all of the children. Contacts must also be done on behalf of all children placed via the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and children residing in Madera County being provided courtesy supervision services.</b></p>

	<p><b>In the event of an emergency the social worker will refer to the master listing of all Foster Family Homes, County Foster Homes, and relative caregivers. Staff will assess the needs of caregiver and child(ren) and provide referrals and resources on an as needed basis in coordination with the Disaster Plan. An electronic emergency tracking form will be established of the temporary locations where children are placed should they need to be moved from their current location.</b></p> <p><b>Probation:</b>  <b>In the event of a disaster, the placement officer or other designated staff will contact each group/foster home provider by telephone to determine the safety and security status of each child or children in their care. If the probation department is satisfied that the safety and security of the child is not in jeopardy, the child/children will remain with the provider.</b></p>
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	<b>In addition to the County Emergency Plan maintained through County Administration, child welfare services will continue to provide services as outlined in this document.</b>
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	<b>In compliance with existing county emergency procedure – Sec. 2.78 of the Madera County Ordinance Codes, child welfare services will evacuate children and families who are affected by the disaster to appropriate and available emergency shelters. The foster parent liaison will contact foster parents, (who were not affected by the event) and neighboring counties for immediate placement of children. Furthermore, the Disaster Plan shall be placed in every “placement” binder and reviewed with the caretaker upon placement of a child.</b>
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	<p><b>In compliance with the Madera County Office of Emergency Services, Child welfare services (CWS) staff shall be assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post to process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors, as well as make efforts to reunify said children with their parents, legal guardian or responsible relatives in accordance with regulations and legislation governing child welfare practice.</b></p> <p><b>If a child becomes displaced due to a disaster (foster child or unaccompanied minor), CWS personnel will first attempt to locate family members for immediate placement. If no safe relative is located, CWS</b></p>

	<p><b>personnel shall locate foster homes, County and/or Foster Family Agency (FFA), for the child(ren). Should the availability of local foster homes be limited, CWS personnel shall contact their Supervisor or Manager for placement outside the County and/or Out of State. The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children Administrator in an adjoining State will be contacted for out of State placement should that become necessary or in the case of relative placement.</b></p> <p><b>Probation:</b>  <b>Children who cannot be return to their parent or guardian will be temporarily housed in a separate unit within the juvenile detention facility or boot camp facility. Probation staff will provide around the clock supervision.</b></p>
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	<p><b>As soon as possible after ensuring the safety of all children in foster care, CWS personnel make due diligent attempts to notify parents and/or legal guardians of the safety of his/her child, unless parental rights have been terminated.</b></p> <p><b>Probation:</b>  <b>The placement officer will be responsible for contacting parents and advising of the circumstances and the status of their child, etc.</b></p>
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	<p><b>CWS staff shall ensure ongoing case management duties are fulfilled on behalf of all dependent children and their families as applicable to current legislation, regulations, and Agency policies guiding child welfare practice.</b></p> <p><b>CWS staff shall be assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post to process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors, as well as make all reasonable efforts to provide supportive services to all children under its care, custody and control, those under its temporary care and supervision and the children's care providers during the disaster. A paper log process would be activated to record, track, and assign applications if the electronic process were unavailable. All information recorded on the paper log would be transferred to the electronic system when restored.</b></p> <p><b>In the event ISAWS were down, staff would use the manual issuance procedure for issuing foster care funds.</b></p>

	<p><b>In the even a main payroll issuance is delayed, caregivers would be expected to provide for the children in their care until the payroll could be issued.</b></p> <p><b>In a County-wide emergency, another California County could be contacted to issue initial and replacement cards or to perform on-line MEDS transactions to provide current eligibility for a client.</b></p> <p><b>CWS personnel shall be assigned to rotating shifts for the care and supervision of detained children. The care and supervision site may be in a designated shelter or other facility that is safe and has food, water and proper sanitation for the children.</b></p> <p><b>The Public Health Nurse will keep a record (log) of every child in foster care that has a special need, takes psychotropic medication, and/or has a medical condition that requires special equipment. This log will be routinely updated and will be provided and attached to the “ER Disaster Child Contact Roster”. The log will be updated by the Public Health Nurse.</b></p> <p><b>Probation:</b>  <b>The probation department will secure a Standing Order for the Juvenile Court to allow for the temporary housing of placement children in the County juvenile detention facilities for the purpose of securing their safety until suitable and safe housing can be established.</b></p> <p><b>The Public Health Nurse will keep a record (log) of every child in placement that has a special need, takes psychotropic medication, and/or has a medical condition that requires special equipment.</b></p>
	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	<p><b>On the basis of an assessment, the Program Manager, in conjunction with a Deputy Director, will delineate the staff needed to address the unique needs presented by the emergency. CWS staff shall be assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post to process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors.</b></p> <p><b>Probation:</b>  <b>The probation department will dispatch all available staff, including supervisors, probation officers and facility officers to the locations where children must be retrieved and relocated. The JSD division</b></p>

	<b>director and supervisors will be primarily responsible for contacting probation personnel and coordinating this operation.</b>
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	<p><b>In compliance with existing emergency procedure – Sec. 2.78 of the Madera County Ordinance Codes, CWS staff shall immediately report to their designated station and conduct their assigned duties and responsibilities, as long as it is safe. If the assigned CWS staff person is not available, the Officer of the Day or another assigned CWS staff person shall ensure caseload coverage. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring all caseloads are covered. Vocational assistants may be assigned to help in this area.</b></p> <p><b>CWS personnel shall continue searching for placement on behalf of detained children until safe, suitable and approved/licensed placements are found and made. During the placement search, CWS personnel shall be assigned to rotating shifts for the care and supervision of detained children. The care and supervision site may be in a designated shelter or other facility that is safe and has food, water and proper sanitation for the children.</b></p> <p><b>CWS personnel shall assist “unaccompanied minors” resulting from the disaster. These children may be delivered to CWS personnel, sent to emergency shelters and/or must be responded to by CWS personnel in other areas of the County. CWS personnel shall make every effort to locate the children’s parents, legal guardians and/or responsible relatives to release the children to during or after the disaster in accordance with the Welfare and Institutions Code and Agency policies and procedures.</b></p> <p><b>County partners will be utilized to provide on-going services, including mental health treatment services.</b></p> <p><b>In a County-wide emergency, another California County could be contacted to issue initial and replacement cards or to perform on-line MEDS transactions to provide current eligibility for a client.</b></p> <p><b>Probation:</b>  <b>Probation staff will provide around the clock supervision of children.</b></p>
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	<b>In compliance with existing county emergency procedure – Sec. 2.78 of the Madera County Ordinance Codes through the Madera County Office of Emergency Services, CWS staff will utilize one of their</b>

	<b>offices: 629 building, 700 building, 720 Building, Oakhurst outstation, Chowchilla Outstation, as a command post.</b> <b>Probation:</b> <b>The probation department will utilize one of five offices: the Juvenile Detention Facility, Boot Camp, Juvenile Services Division, Adult Services Division or the Administrative Offices.</b>
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	<p><b>All employees are directed to take the Disaster Plan seriously and respond to it expeditiously as to guard their safety, as well as the safety of all youth in foster care. Supervisors are to address disaster preparedness during their staff meetings.</b></p> <p><b>The Disaster Plan will be placed in every “placement” binder and be reviewed with each foster parent/relative caregiver upon placement of a child in their home. The Foster parents/relative caregiver will provide the Department with an emergency evacuation plan for their home in case of a disaster. The foster parent/relative caregiver will receive annual training on disaster preparedness.</b></p>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:</b>	<b>Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:</b>
Essential Function:	1. New child welfare investigation process
Process Description:	<p><b>CWS staff will be assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post and be available for 24 hour, 7 day emergency standby to conduct child abuse and neglect referral investigations as reported to the CPS hotline and/or on behalf of families temporarily located in the shelters, if needed.</b></p> <p><b>CWS staff located at the shelters shall accept Suspected Child Abuse Reports (SCARs) and respond in accordance with legislation, regulations, and Agency policies dictation child welfare practice.</b></p> <p><b>Immediate response social workers will utilize structured decision making in consultation with supervisory staff to determine the needs, safety, and risk of children in the home being investigated. Each report must be triaged for response time.</b></p> <p><b>10 day response would be responded to as the disaster area is secured and adequate staff are available.</b></p> <p><b>Immediate response reports will need staff dispatched to investigate if the geographic area is safe to enter based on the nature of the disaster. If safety is secure, assessment will occur in the field according to standard policy. If removal of children is necessary, all policy and procedures would be followed.</b></p>
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services

Process Description:	<p><b>CWS staff shall provide pre-placement preventative services and/or foster care placement services, as needed, and as regulated by current legislation, regulations, and Agency policies guiding child welfare practice. Staff has access to county-wide service information for service referrals through the county website.</b></p> <p><b>Mental health services will be coordinated through the Department and the Madera County Office of Emergency Services. New services will be developed with contracted vendors to provide support services during and after a disaster.</b></p> <p><b>In the event of an emergency, foster care eligibility worker(s) shall be called upon to process funds to foster homes, which can include, but are not limited to, clothing, and special/emergency needs. Budget Issuance Clerk(s) will be called upon to issue payments for foster care funding.</b></p>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:</b>	<b>Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	<b>The disaster plan may only be activated by direct consent of the Madera County Department of Social Services Director or his designee. In the event of a disaster, all staff is to contact their regularly assigned Program Manager for emergency assignments.</b>
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	<p><b>In the event of a disaster, the Madera County Department of Social Services Director will activate the disaster plan and will coordinate communication. In the event the Director becomes incapacitated, the chain of command will be adhered to for contact of personnel purposes.</b></p> <p><b>Probation: In the event of a disaster, the Juvenile Services Division Supervisor will activate the disaster plan and will coordinate communication. The probation department will utilize the phone tree process already in place to contact all available staff to respond to JSD for implementation of emergency services to children in placement. Should the JSD Director be incapacitated, the chain of command will be adhered to for contact of personnel purposes.</b></p>

Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	<b>The tree phone will be updated every three months to reflect current staff telephone numbers and emergency phone numbers. Contracted services will be utilized via the Madera County Office of Emergency Services. Current partners will be utilized to provide on-going services to children in care.</b>  <b>Probation: The phone tree will be updated every three months.</b>
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	<b>CWS and Probation: Those who have cell phones, pagers, or radios, are to turn them on and keep them available for use as needed.</b>
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	<b>Staff will be kept abreast of all new information as soon as the information is known to the Director, Deputy Directors or Program Managers.</b>
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	<b>Communication with the media will be utilized and authorized by the Madera County Office of Emergency Services.</b>
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	<b>Communication will be coordinated through the Madera County Office of Emergency Services.</b>
Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	<b>The Madera County Office of Emergency Services will provide a toll free number to the public.</b>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:</b>	<b>Preserve essential program records:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	<b>All eligibility functions and child welfare services documentation are primarily available on-line. To protect records and use information systems that can be accessed during an emergency, it is</b>

	<p><b>important to do the following:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Store case records and paper files in filing cabinets to better protect them from smoke or water damage.</li> <li>2. Ensure that contact information and other placement information are kept up to date in CWS/CMS and in the case file. Since the CWS/CMS information has off-site backup, critical information will be maintained in the event of a local disaster, however it may be temporarily inaccessible due to power outages.</li> <li>3. Providing the state CWS/CMS system is operational in the administration office, documentation will occur in accordance to established policy and procedure. If the CWS/CMS system is not operational, manual documentation in the case file will occur.</li> <li>4. Manual documentation would cease once the CWS/CMS system is fully operational in each of the regional offices. Clerical staff will be assigned to assist with the data entry of all manual documentation completed during the response plan.</li> </ol>
	5. Use of off-site back-up system
<b>Process Description:</b>	<p>The CMS/CWS system can be accessed through various computers throughout the county and the State.</p> <p><b>Probation:</b> The probation data base can be accessed through various probation locations or other county agencies throughout the county.</p>
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:</b>	<b>Coordinate services and share information with other states:</b>
<b>Essential Function:</b>	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process
<b>Process Description:</b>	<p><b>Contacts must be done on behalf of all children placed via the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and children residing in Madera County whereby courtesy supervision services are being provided.</b></p> <p><b>The CWS staff person assigned to the case will be responsible for contacting the other County or State where the child is a dependent to keep them updated on the whereabouts of their child and to arrange for transportation back to said County or State, if necessary. The staff member will make a follow-up face to face visit with the family as soon as travel conditions are safe.</b></p>

Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	<b>Madera County Behavioral Health may be called upon to provide mental health services during and after a disaster. Services will be coordinated through the Madera County Office of Emergency Services.</b>
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active efforts to follow all Court Orders made prior to the disaster will be made.</li> <li>2. In the event of a life threatening situation, the CWS staff will require the approval of a program manager and/or Deputy Director to act in opposition to an existing Court Order and a Court Report will be filed as soon as possible explaining why the applicable Court Order could not be followed.</li> <li>3. All other rights given to caretakers and parents by Statute apply during a disaster situation.</li> <li>4. In compliance with reporting requirements regarding fatalities and near fatalities due to suspected child abuse, CWS staff shall contact their immediate Supervisor, Manager, or Deputy Director to notify and get further instruction.</li> <li>5. CWS personnel shall document all efforts, services, contacts and the results in CWS/CMS when reasonably possible, regardless of which child or family it is they come into contact with. Hand written notes shall be kept until it is possible to enter the data. Any required documents or forms must be filled out by hand, if necessary. All information recorded on the paper log would be transferred to the electronic system when restored</li> <li>6. Welfare and Institutions Code Petitions and Reports must be prepared and filed within statutory guidelines during and after a disaster in the event the Court system is functioning. The Agency will maintain statutory requirements for the detention of children if Court days are being counted in the County. All other legal and civil rights accorded to children and their families continue to apply during or after a disaster; therefore, CWS personnel will make active efforts to comply with those regulations.</li> <li>7. The court will identify an on-call judicial officer in the event of a disaster. The court supervisor will be responsible for contacting court personnel to coordinate services. If</li> </ol>

	<p><b>court personnel are not readily available, the court supervisor will coordinate services through the Madera County Office of Emergency Services.</b></p> <p><b>Probation: In like manner, the Probation Department will continue to file reports according to statutory guidelines during and after a disaster in the even the Court system is functioning.</b></p>
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	<b>Federal partners will be engaged through the Madera County Office of Emergency Services. Madera County Department of Social Services will follow state directives and communication regarding dissemination of information from federal authorities targeting child welfare.</b>
Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	<b>The Department will work with CDSS to ensure the safety and well being of children located in Madera County. Madera County Department of Social Services will follow state guidance regarding communication with CDSS. It is hoped that the state will provide alerts, information exchange, etc. using the CDSS website and/or a toll free number.</b>
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	<b>Tribes will be notified in the same fashion as parents and legal guardians regarding the safety and well being of Indian children. If another home/location is needed for tribal children, the tribe will immediately be contact for placement options. Whenever possible, preference will be given to the tribe.</b>
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	<b>All Volunteers will be coordinated through the Madera County Office of Emergency Services and appropriate health and safety code precautions will be adhered to.</b>